

Monday, January 15, 2007

To: Joint Appropriations Committee on Natural Resources

Chairman Ripley, members of the committee

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to the budget committee today as a proponent of the line items NP-2007-Biofuels Testing in DEQ's budget for Planning, Prevention & Assistance.

My name is Matthew Elsaesser and I am the executive director of The S.A.V.E. Foundation or the Student Advocates for Valuing the Environment, a non-profit corporation based here in Helena.

We make our own biodiesel from used fry oil, run 100% biodiesel year-round in one of our recycling truck, and have an educational program called Biodiesel Montana.

We've crossed much of the state with live country music and demonstrations on how to make biodiesel.

These tours have connected us with Montana citizens excited about the potential of biodiesel in their communities. We've met farmers excited to grow seed crops, persons already making their own fuel, and biodiesel enthusiast from all walks of life. This has included serious persons ready to make biodiesel part of their business.

Biofuel will help our state, especially our rural communities. It provides a new market for Montana crops, enables farmers to make their own fuel and be insulated from high fuel costs, and will bring good jobs and economic growth with production and sale of the fuel.

To help make this happen, Montana needs a facility to provide quality testing at a price local operations can afford. \$1,500 to test one batch of fuel is too high for young operations. It will also allow our agricultural state to lead the way in biofuels research.

We applaud DEQ for bring this bill forward. It is the right way to foster biofuel production in this state.

Thank you very much.



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